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NSW Public Schools

Newsstand

NSW public school educators in WWI & WWII

For the first time, it is now possible to digitally access a carefully researched record of the biographical details of NSW public school teachers and education department officers who enlisted to serve their country in World War I and World War II.

The three-part *New South Wales Department of Education Record of Service in Two World Wars* was written by T A White, an esteemed NSW public school educator who served with honour in the AIF in World War I.

This unique work also provides an equally carefully researched account of contributions to the war effort during both world wars made by public school teachers, students, principals, public school officers, schools and their wider communities.

- Introduction (PDF - 2.2MB)
- Part I (PDF - 106MB)
- Part II (PDF - 58MB)
- Part III (PDF - 24MB)

Note: the PDFs can be searched, press Ctrl-F (PC) or Command ⌘-F (Mac).

Thomas Alexander White

Thomas Alexander White (1886- 1962) was a distinguished NSW public school teacher, principal, inspector, author and historian. He was also a distinguished soldier who enlisted in the AIF in February 1916 (he originally applied in 1914) and served on the Western Front on a number of famous Australian World War I battlefields.

The famous battles in which he fought included those at Mametz, Ypres, Polygon Wood, and Villers-Bretonneux. While fighting at Passchendaele in October 1917 he and about a quarter of his battalion were seriously injured in a mustard gas attack - the effects of which Tom suffered for the rest of his life. On October 19, 1918 while serving in the village of Picquigny, Tom was mentioned in despatches for gallantry for attempting to save a soldier in a canal.

Following his retirement from the Department of Education in 1950, Mr White undertook his New South Wales Department of Education Record of Service in Two World Wars. He commenced his remarkable task in 1951 and completed it in 1958. He died in 1962, still deeply disappointed that his work had never been published.

A meticulously researched work

In Parts I and II he included meticulously researched biographical details about the NSW public school teachers and departmental officers who had enlisted in both world wars. Tom White undertook this seven-year task because he had a burning desire that every NSW public school teacher, student and departmental official should learn about those public school teachers and officers who had enlisted to serve their country. As he wrote by hand very early in Part I, "Their children and their children's children will be proud of them. They have the right to know of them."

Both Parts I and II, and especially Part III, also include a wealth of information concerning the contribution to the War effort made by public schools, the Department of Education (as it was then called), school communities, students and other individuals and organisations associated with or supporters of NSW public education.

The Introduction that follows written by Dr Paul Brock AM, the Department's Director of Learning and Development Research, provides some biographical details about Tom White's career, the scope of his extraordinary manuscript and the background to the processes which led finally to its digital publication.

Retaining the authenticity and historical integrity of T A White's manuscript

The NSW Department of Education & Communities has chosen to replicate the three volumes in exactly their original condition, wherever possible, to retain the authenticity and historical integrity of the works; including any original duplications, defects, blemishes or corrections.

Disclaimers

The Department of Education and Communities has not verified the accuracy of the information or detail contained in these works. The works are a replication of T.A White's original works (plus the Preface, written by Dr J H Dugdale, to the 1996 publication of a handful of sets of the three volumes). Any views expressed or any errors or omissions in these works are the author's and are not necessarily those of the Department, nor necessarily intended to represent those of the Department.

The works are about war and may contain some content and depictions that may be upsetting or cause offence to some persons. They have been maintained to retain the historical integrity of the works and to understand the context in which the works were produced.

Acknowledgements

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